

Federation Designates Funds to Help Jewish Causes in Charlotte and Abroad

By Amy Krakovitz Montoni

An elderly woman in Voronezh, Russia, will have Shabbat candles to light.

A teenager in Charlotte will attend a "Mitzvot from A-Z" class at Hebrew High.

A woman from Ethiopia will be able to start her own business in her new home in Israel.

A teacher from Temple Israel Religious School will have access to the educational resources at CAJE.

An Argentinean émigré in Kiryat Bialik will learn to speak Hebrew more fluently.

A resident of the Blumenthal Jewish Home will rest comfortably tonight.

A student of Neve Michael will find comfort in a foster home with his siblings.

All these things and more were made possible by you and your generous contribution to the 2001 Campaign of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte. The more \$2.3 million that the Charlotte Jewish community donated last year has been allocated here and abroad to help build and maintain Jewish continuity, and to protect the interests of the Jewish people in Charlotte, in the United States, in Israel, and in other countries.

By far the largest portion of the money is kept here in the local community where everyone from the smallest preschoolers (beneficiaries: the Charlotte Jewish Preschool and the Jewish Preschool on Sardis) to the elderly (beneficiary: Blumenthal Jewish Home) and everyone in between directly experiences your gifts to the Federation.

Even within our local community, agencies such as Loaves and Fishes and Crisis Assistance, as well as other Charlotte community agencies, receive grants from the Federation in order to continue their *Gemilut Chasidim* (acts of loving-kindness).

Our community was able to designate a portion of the campaign donations to Israel and Overseas to meet the needs of Jews in Israel and worldwide. A special Allocations Subcommittee, chaired by Bobbi Bernstein, was formed to determine how these dollars should be spent.

gogue was built in 1902. But the communist regime suppressed religious expression and for many generations, the Jews of Voronezh



Celebrating Chanukah at Hessed Nechama in Voronezh, Russia.

had no connection or knowledge of their traditions and heritage.

But all that is changing now. In Voronezh, as in the rest of the FSU, there has been a reawakening interest in Judaism, as scores of Jews are seeking to discover their lost heritage. The growth of Jewish activities range from establishing religious schools to celebrating Jewish holidays to assisting the needy elderly.

Of the 6,000 Jews in Voronezh, 1,500 are elderly and the vast majority of them are in need from the community. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), an arm of the United Jewish Communities (UJC), helped open *Hessed Nechama* in 1998. This organization provides welfare services to needy Jews in and around Voronezh. In the first ten months of 2001, *Hessed Nechama* gave out: almost 13,000 food packages; more than 9,000 hot meals at communal dining halls; 28,000 hours of home care assistance; loans of medical equipment, medicines, and medical consultations.

Hessed Nechama has begun a Sunday School program that has 60 students who are learning Hebrew, Jewish history and tradition. They get to learn about their heritage through dance, music, theater, and arts.

As an agency under the umbrella of UJC, the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte is a perfect position to assist our sister city in the FSU so that *Hessed Nechama* can continue to provide medical programs and Jewish renewal programs with a gift of \$110,000.

Extended Ulpan in Kiryat Bialik
We all can imagine how traumatic it must be to uproot your life and move not just to a new neighborhood, or a new city, or even a new state, but to move thousands of miles across the ocean to a new country. Even more difficult, particularly for adults, is learning a new language.

In Israel, the acclaimed Ulpan (immersion) system to teach Hebrew has been successful, but more so for younger people than for older. One request that our local delegation heard during a Federation mission to Israel was from the Argentinean émigrés in Kiryat Bialik. The adults among the immigrants said that if only they could attend the Ulpan just a little bit longer, they would feel more comfortable in Israeli society.

But the funds for granting them extended lessons in the Ulpan did not exist at the time. That is why the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte created a new pro-

gram with \$20,000 of your generously donated campaign funds to extend the Ulpan in Kiryat Bialik for Argentinean Jews.

This is an exciting program conceived and piloted by the professional staff and lay leaders of the local Charlotte Federation. **P2K Hadera Eiron and Neve Michael**

Our Partnership 2000 relationship with Hadera Eiron continues and the Federation has allocated \$33,820 to the region. Of that, \$2,025 has been designated for Neve Michael, a children's home for abused and neglected children in the area.

Neve Michael is not an institution, it is a residential home for children at risk — a warm and caring environment for over 250 children aged three to 18 who cannot stay with their biological families.



The synagogue at Neve Michael.

These children come from all over Israel. They are the victims of neglect, physical and sexual abuse, and many have been witness to acts of violence.

At Neve Michael, children can grow, learn and enjoy better, happier and healthier lives than they would otherwise be exposed to.

All the children are raised in family units by a married couple with their own children. Everyone lives together in a loving family atmosphere. Siblings can stay together.

The on-site elementary school, under the auspices of the Israeli Ministry of Education, is open to both Neve Michael and local Hadera-Eiron children, where the two groups learn together. There is even a special class for youngsters who find attending school difficult. Special day care facilities are open until 7:00 PM.

Neve Michael is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in order to take in little ones at a moment's notice. "Like flowers," they say at Neve Michael, "children need to be nurtured to grow straight and tall. We at Neve Michael are dedicated to doing just that. ... And we serve the best chicken soup in Israel."

(Continued on page 6)

2002 Beneficiary Agencies

<i>Anti-Defamation League</i> , a historic organization stressing human rights issues.....	1,000
<i>Blumenthal Jewish Home</i> , nursing care services in a dignified setting	15,000
<i>B'nai B'rith Youth Organization</i> , a youth-led, worldwide organization, promoting Jewish identity and personal growth.....	11,500
<i>Carolina Agency for Jewish Education</i> , provides a variety of Jewish educational services throughout the Carolinas ..	12,600
<i>Charlotte Community Agencies: Charlotte Clergy Association, Charlotte Emergency Housing, Community Link, Crisis Assistance, Mecklenburg Ministries, and Loaves and Fishes</i>	3,200
<i>Charlotte Jewish Day School</i> , a quality K-5 day school ..	105,000
<i>Charlotte Jewish News</i> , a monthly publication providing local, national and international news and features.....	2,000
<i>Charlotte Jewish Preschool</i> , a quality preschool educational program and full day childcare facility.....	13,500
<i>Community Tzedakah Fund</i> , emergency loans for needy local families.....	20,000
<i>Consolidated High School of Jewish Studies</i> , an enriched academic program for Charlotte-area youth.....	4,910
<i>Education Subsidies</i> , provide support for the religious school programs of Temple Beth El, Temple Israel, and Congregation Or HaTorah	20,569
<i>Foundation for the Charlotte Jewish Community</i> , the community endowment fund.....	2,500
<i>Hebrew Cemetery</i> , provides dignified services for indigent community members	5,000
<i>Israel and Overseas</i> , meets the needs of Jews in Israel and worldwide through United Jewish Communities.....	682,725
As a community Charlotte has designated part of our overseas allocation to support:	
☆ <i>the social services needs and Jewish renewal programs for our sister city of Voronezh in the Former Soviet Union</i>	
☆ <i>Hadera-Eiron, our partnership community in Israel</i>	
☆ <i>an extended ulpan (Hebrew course) for adults in Kiryat Bialik, a haven for Argentinean Jews</i>	
☆ <i>an entrepreneurial training program for Ethiopian women</i>	
☆ <i>Neve Michael, a group home for abused children in Hadera</i>	
<i>Jewish Community Center</i> , enriches Jewish lives through cultural, educational, and athletic programming.....	383,819
<i>Jewish Education Loan Fund</i> , provides scholarships for Charlotte college-bound students.....	3,250
<i>Jewish Family Services</i> , professional counseling and family education programs.....	150,500
<i>Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte</i> , Federation's local expenses, including program, campaign, operations, Bernstein Leadership, Shalom Y'all, the Jewish Women's Network, YAD (Young Adult Division), and community special events.....	536,186
<i>Missions to Israel</i> , provide mission subsidies for community members.....	15,000
<i>North Carolina Hillel</i> , cultural, religious and social programs for college students throughout the state.....	12,000
<i>Preschool on Sardis</i> , a quality preschool educational programs.....	10,000
<i>Shalom Park Rent Subsidies, JCC, Temple Beth El, Temple Israel, Charlotte Jewish Preschool</i>	227,575
<i>Speizman Jewish Library</i> , serves Jewish educational institutions and the community at large	18,150
<i>Teens to Israel and birthright israel</i> , provides scholarships for teens and young adults traveling to Israel on recognized programs.....	9,767

**Total 2002 Allocations,
\$2,265,751**

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Art class at Hessed Nechama in Voronezh, Russia.

Voronezh, Russia

Voronezh in the Former Soviet Union is the official Russian sister city of Charlotte. In a lot of ways it even resembles Charlotte. Its population, 900,000, is close to that of the Charlotte area. And its Jewish population, 6,000 souls, is about the same percentage of the population at large as here in Charlotte.

Voronezh is located just over 250 miles southeast of Moscow. The first Jewish citizens began arriving in Voronezh in the middle of the 19th century. Its first syna-



Scott Gorelick speaking at Kiryat Bialik last summer.

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